

Podu cultivation

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In news– The political tussle is going on over ‘podu cultivation’ and forest lands in Telangana.

What is the issue?

- The Telangana government had decided in October 2021 to move landless, non-tribal farmers engaged in shifting cultivation (podu) inside forests to peripheral areas in an effort to combat deforestation.
- Several political leaders have expressed concern over shifting agriculture.
- To stop this deforestation, the government wanted to move out cultivators from deep inside forests to the periphery by allotting them land for cultivation.
- Government said that tribal farmers who have been traditionally cultivating for decades would not be affected by this drive against illegal encroachers.

What is Podu Cultivation?

- Podu is **a form of shifting agriculture using slash-and-burn methods**. The word ‘Podu’ comes from the Telugu language.
- **Shifting cultivation is a process in which a portion of land is cleared to raise crops in a particular season** before the cultivators move to another location the next season, and to a third area after that, thus progressively degrading large areas of the forest.
- **Traditionally used on the hill-slopes of Andhra Pradesh, it is similar to the jhum method found in north-east India** and the **bewar system of Madhya Pradesh**.
- **In the 1980s, it remained the principal method of tilling land for some tribal communities** in districts such as East Godavari, West Godavari and, most prevalently, Srikakulam, although even by the 1950s its

use by the Kolam and Naikpod tribes of Adilabad district had been entirely suppressed.

Different names of Shifting cultivation-

Country/State/region	Name of the shifting cultivation
Ladang	Indonesia
Milpa	Central America & Mexico
Masole	Central America
Taungya	Myanmar
Chena	Sri Lanka
Roca	Brazil
Conuco	Venezuela
Tamrai	Thailand
Ray	Vietnam
Caingin	Philippines
South-eastern Rajasthan	Batra
North-eastern India	Jhum
Bastar District (Chhattisgarh)	Deepa
Southern States	Zara and Erka
Madhya Pradesh	Bewar, Vevar and Dahiyaar
Odisha	Kaman, Vinga and Dhavi